

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 11

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2003 Regular Session
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By: **Senators Stone, McFadden, Della, Hollinger, Hughes, Jimeno, Jones,
and Klausmeier**

Introduced and read first time: February 26, 2003

Assigned to: Rules

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Bethlehem Steel Corporation Retirees Health Care and Life Insurance**
3 **Benefits**

4 FOR the purpose of urging the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, International Steel
5 Group, the United Steelworkers of America, the Governor, and the Maryland
6 Congressional Delegation to take appropriate measures to assure continued
7 affordable health care and life insurance benefits for Bethlehem Steel
8 Corporation retirees and their dependents.

9 WHEREAS, Bethlehem Steel Corporation ("Bethlehem") has operated a steel
10 mill and shipyard at Sparrows Point in Baltimore County for more than four
11 generations that currently employs 3,300 people; and

12 WHEREAS, Bethlehem has been operating under the protection of Chapter 11
13 of the United States Bankruptcy Code since October 2001, and now, pending approval
14 of the Bankruptcy Court, has agreed to be sold to International Steel Group, Inc.
15 ("ISG") of Cleveland, Ohio, which bought and reopened the bankrupt LTV
16 Corporation's steel mills in the spring of 2002; and

17 WHEREAS, Bethlehem gave written notice on February 6, 2003 that it plans to
18 end health and life insurance benefits for its retirees and dependents on March 31,
19 2003, which is a devastating blow to 19,000 Baltimore area retirees and dependents
20 who now face the prospect of skyrocketing monthly health care insurance bills; and

21 WHEREAS, Representatives of Bethlehem retiree groups are attempting to
22 negotiate with Bethlehem officials an extension of the termination date of health care
23 and life insurance benefits from March 31, 2003 to May 31, 2003 to allow time for
24 negotiation of group replacement health care benefit coverage with several bidding
25 insurers, and a union-negotiated trust to cover retiree health insurance benefits
26 similar to a trust ISG negotiated with the union for the benefits of retirees of LTV
27 Corporation and Acme Steel Corporation; and

28 WHEREAS, It is imperative that group health care insurance and life insurance
29 replacement coverage be negotiated to provide comparable benefits at affordable
30 premiums to the 19,000 Bethlehem retirees and their dependents in light of the fact

1 that most retirees are on fixed income and have health issues to manage resulting
2 from their employment; now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That
4 Bethlehem Steel Corporation, International Steel Group, Incorporated ("ISG"), and
5 the United Steelworkers of America are urged to work together to negotiate a group
6 health care insurance and life insurance plan at affordable rates for Bethlehem Steel
7 Corporation retirees and dependents who have lost or will lose their health care
8 insurance and life insurance coverage as a result of Bethlehem Steel Corporation's
9 termination of benefits announced February 6, 2003; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That Bethlehem Steel Corporation and ISG are requested to pay
11 for as much of the retiree's and dependent's replacement health care insurance and
12 life insurance coverage as possible and to take action to ensure as smooth a transition
13 as possible; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That ISG is requested to establish a benefit trust for Bethlehem
15 Steel Corporation retirees and dependents similar to the benefit trust ISG
16 established for the retirees of LTV Steel Corporation and Acme Steel Corporation; and
17 be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Governor is requested to determine what assistance the
19 State can provide to Bethlehem Steel Corporation retirees and dependents who lose
20 their health insurance and life insurance benefits because of the termination of
21 benefits by Bethlehem Steel Corporation; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Maryland Congressional Delegation is requested to seek
23 federal aid for Bethlehem Steel Corporation retirees and dependents who lose their
24 health insurance and life insurance benefits because of the termination of benefits by
25 Bethlehem Steel Corporation; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
27 Legislative Services to the Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor of Maryland;
28 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
29 the Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
31 Legislative Services to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Paul S.
32 Sarbanes and Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510;
33 and Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger III, Benjamin L.
34 Cardin, Albert R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G. Bartlett, Elijah E.
35 Cummings, and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., House Office Building, Washington,
36 D.C. 20515; and be it further

37 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
38 Legislative Services to Robert S. Miller, Jr., Chairman of the Board and Chief
39 Executive Officer, Bethlehem Steel Corporation, 1170 Eight Avenue, Bethlehem, PA
40 18016-7699; Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer,
41 W. L. Ross and Company, L.L.C., Manhattan Tower, 101 East 52nd Street, New York,

1 NY 10022; and Leo Gerard, International President, United Steelworkers of America,
2 5 Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.